DOCUMENT RESUME

ED 399 606 CS 509 356

AUTHOR Overmier, Mary; And Others
TITLE Dimensions of Nonverbal Communication.
INSTITUTION Illinois Univ., Urbana. Cooperative Extension Service.
SPONS AGENCY Extension Service (DOA), Washington, D.C.
PUB DATE 95
NOTE 33p.; For related documents, see CS 509 353-355.
PUB TYPE Guides - Classroom Use - Instructional Materials (For Learner) (051)

EDRS PRICE MF01/PC02 Plus Postage.
DESCRIPTORS Class Activities; *Communication Skills; Higher Education; *Nonverbal Communication; Secondary Education
IDENTIFIERS Communication Behavior; *Message Transmission

ABSTRACT

After a brief description of the dimensions of nonverbal communication, this booklet presents 21 activities that deal with nonverbal communication. Activities in the booklet involve body movements (kinesics), facial expressions, eye movements, perception and use of space (proxemics), haptics (touch), paralinguistics (vocal elements that accompany speech), clothing, and self-image. (RS)

****
* Reproductions supplied by EDRS are the best that can be made *
* from the original document. *
****

ED 399 606

CS

Dimensions of Nonverbal Communication

U.S. DEPARTMENT OF EDUCATION
Office of Educational Research and Improvement
EDUCATIONAL RESOURCES INFORMATION
CENTER (ERIC)
☑ This document has been reproduced as received from the person or organization originating it.
☐ Minor changes have been made to improve reproduction quality.
• Points of view or opinions stated in this document do not necessarily represent official OERI position or policy.

BEST COPY AVAILABLE

Co-produced by 4-H and Information Services, College of Agricultural, Consumer and Environmental Sciences, University of Illinois at Urbana-Champaign

Graphic Design: Michele Plante
Photography: Steve Hunts, Gary Lim, Michele Plante, David Riecks, and Brian Stauffer
Writing: Mary Overmier, with Cheryl Frank and Lisa Sheppard
4-H Coordinator: Sharon Petefish

Special thanks to the New Art Theatre, Champaign, IL

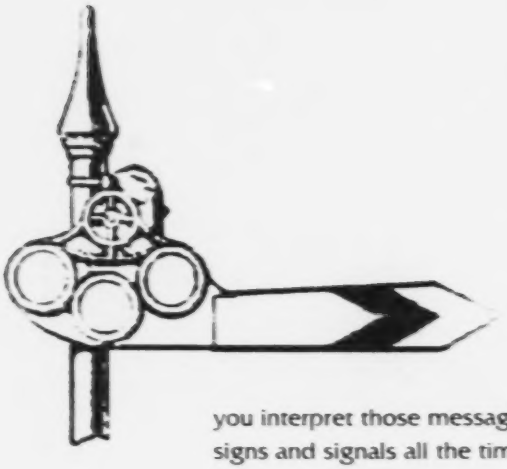
Cooperative Extension Service, College of Agricultural, Consumer and Environmental Sciences, University of Illinois at Urbana-Champaign
Issued in furtherance of Cooperative Extension Work, Acts of May 8 and June 30, 1914, in cooperation with the U.S. Department of Agriculture. Donald L. Uchtmann, Director, Cooperative Extension Service, University of Illinois at Urbana-Champaign. The Cooperative Extension Service provides equal opportunities in programs and employment.

Copyright © 1995 by University of Illinois Board of Trustees.

CS509356

BEST COPY AVAILABLE

Dimensions of Nonverbal Communication



If you watch a soap opera or a music video with the sound turned down, the chances are good that you can figure out how the characters feel about each other. In the school lunchroom, you can look around and probably tell who had a fantastic morning and who didn't.

Although you can't read other people's minds, you receive many wordless messages every day. Your life experience lets you interpret those messages. Also, you radiate nonverbal signs and signals all the time yourself!

Because no two persons have the same experiences and reactions, their views of the world are not just alike. They don't use or interpret messages the same way. Learning about these differences is more than an interesting exercise in people-watching. It also can help you interpret messages from other people and make sure that they understand what you mean.

Many researchers tell us that the words we speak carry only about a third of the emotional or social content in a face-to-face conversation. You supply all the rest: how you use your voice and body, your clothes and the settings, even how close you stand or sit to someone.

If you've watched a mime or played charades, you may know which kinds of wordless messages are easy or hard to understand. Mostly, the nonverbal messages between two people

- express their emotions,
  - show their attitude toward each other,
- display some part of their personalities,
  - and go along with speech.

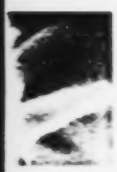
The next sections examine some nonverbal behaviors and how they fit together—both as a language system and for you as an individual.

Kinesics

From the twitch of an eyelid to a playful smile or a shrug of your shoulders, your body movements broadcast messages to everyone around you. Sometimes you're aware of those movements and the effect you hope to have: You smile for a photographer or raise a hand in class. At other times, messages "leak" out even if you try to mask them. Disappointment or joy can sweep across a face for an instant despite its owner's words of denial. A student who doesn't know the answer in class can avoid eye contact with the teacher but still be called on.

At least since the 1950s, body movement has been studied as a form of nonverbal communication. **Kinesics**, often called body language, studies how humans communicate through body movement, including

- **gestures or postures of the body,**
- **facial expressions,**
- **and eye behavior**



The human body can make thousands of different movements. But only a few have meanings that many people can agree on. Even when people speak the same language, they can use and understand gestures differently. In part, the context shapes the meaning of any nonverbal message. Also, sometimes we're just not aware of sending and receiving messages. And, as with words, you can either intend or "read" a meaning that no one else shares. Or perhaps you haven't learned a meaning that many people know.

regulator

To study these wordless messages of body movement, we can sort them into four classes: **Emblems** have a direct verbal translation. Most people within a culture or group agree on their meanings. The hands make most emblems—such as the signs used by underwater divers.

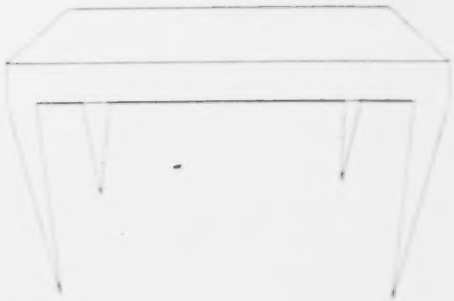
The second kind of message, the **regulators**, act as a traffic cop as people take turns talking. We may be unaware of sending such messages ourselves but be very sensitive to those directed at us. A slight nod of the head, for instance, encourages a speaker to continue. Or, instead, a listener may inch forward in the chair and glance at the doorway. That signals a speaker to wrap up the conversation or switch topics.

mood displays illustrator

Affect or **mood displays** are mainly facial expressions that show emotion. Sometimes the sender of this kind of message doesn't know that the emotions are showing.

Likewise, some people don't tune in to these messages. The stronger the emotion, however, the harder it is to hide: It shows not only on the face but also affects posture and movement.

While emblems can replace spoken words, **illustrators** are nonverbal acts that go along with speech. They help get the meaning across to a listener. Two examples are pointing to an object or pounding on a table to emphasize a statement.



Activity 1

The following exercises can help you become more aware of the nonverbal messages of body movements. Once you know the common meanings of various nonverbal acts, you can choose the messages you want to send. As a careful observer of body language and other wordless cues, you can improve your ability to understand and interpret messages from other people.

Match the following movements with their possible meanings or intended effect. Then classify each movement as used here as an E emblem, I illustrator, M mood display, or R regulator.

Moving Messages

10 R

1. let me speak next
2. this-s-s long
3. instructions to a player
4. good luck
5. pride or confidence
6. a pledge of group solidarity
7. good job
8. displeasure
9. reinforces your words
10. keeps another person from interrupting you
11. shame on you
12. peace (or victory)
13. sit here
14. money
15. let me interrupt

avoiding eye contact while talking louder and faster

crossing your fingers

a friendly pat on the back

frowning

holding one hand up with two fingers making a V

holding your hands apart, palms facing each other, while talking about your fishing trip

patting the seat next to you as you ask a friend to join you at lunch

pointing to the left as you tell a driver where to turn

raising a hand in class

rubbing the forefinger of one hand over the entire length of the forefinger of the other hand

rubbing the thumb and forefinger together

the Scout salute

signals used by baseball coaches

standing tall

8

tugs on your sleeve by a small child

BEST COPY AVAILABLE

Activity 2 Under Your Skin

"idiom: a phrase that becomes accepted although it differs from the usual pattern of our language

The connections between our emotions and their reflection in our body movements are so strong that they shape the language we use. These links come to light when we create an expression or idiom* to talk about our feelings. The trouble we have in rephrasing such expressions points out two things about the nonverbal messages we send with our bodies: how central they are to our thinking and talking about feelings and how verbal and nonverbal messages and meanings become intertwined.

Rephrase or define the following expressions without referring to the human body.

to be all ears

to be all eyes

to bend over backward

to drag your heels

to keep your ear to the ground

to keep your head above water

to keep a stiff upper lip

to keep your chin up

to keep an eye on the ball

to be on your toes

to take (something) at face value

to keep your feet on the ground

to get off on the wrong foot

to give an ear to

to make your hair stand on end

to raise an eyebrow

to see eye to eye

to throw your weight around

to thumb a ride

to turn your back on

Activity 3 Movement Idioms in Print

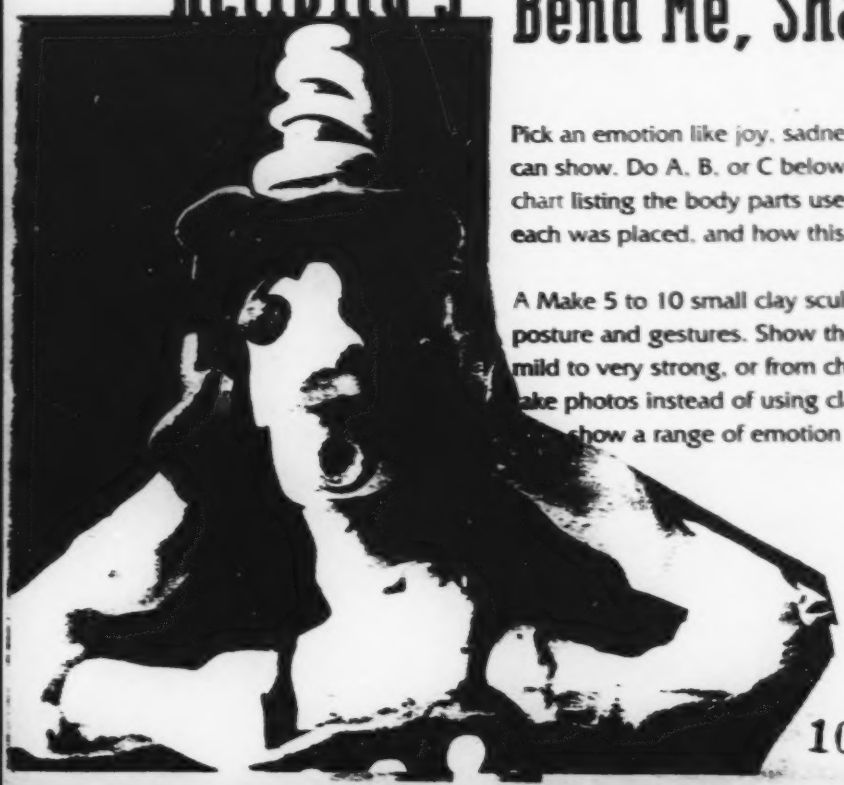
For at least 10 of the idioms above, find examples of the phrase being used to describe the behavior of both a person in a newspaper or magazine and a fictional character.

Make and illustrate a chart or poster showing the idioms, their meanings, and the examples you found.

Activity 4 Kinesics on Location

Observe and compare how the people around you send wordless messages with body language (using movement, gestures, facial expressions). Make and illustrate a chart showing the kind and number of messages you saw and the effect on passersby or the intended receiver. Compare people ☞ acting in television comedies and soap operas with those giving a news broadcast; ☞ in at least three different real-life roles (for instance, street musician, auctioneer, used-car salesperson, member of the clergy, politician, waitperson); and ☞ from at least three age ranges. One effect you may see is that body language becomes more controlled in older people. A very young child displays each emotion with the whole body (from wriggling with delight to pounding the ground in a tantrum).

Activity 5 Bend Me, Shape Me



Pick an emotion like joy, sadness, or anger that body posture can show. Do A, B, or C below. Then make and illustrate a chart listing the body parts used to show the emotion, how each was placed, and how this changed from figure to figure.

A Make 5 to 10 small clay sculptures to show the emotion by posture and gestures. Show the feeling through a range, from mild to very strong, or from childhood to old age. ☞ Find or take photos instead of using clay. ☞ With either photos or clay, show a range of emotion using only faces.

Activity 6 Any Way You Slic It

Discover more about how the face communicates emotions. From books and magazines, cut out, photocopy, or trace full-face photos showing various emotions (such as surprise, anger, boredom, happiness, disgust, and sadness).

Using at least five of the photos, cut each to divide it into three zones: the brows and forehead, the eyes, and the mouth. Ask five of your classmates which emotion each slice shows. Each rater should see the slices for each zone separately (for instance, rating all the mouths first). For each emotion shown, calculate the percent of right answers based on each region.

Make and illustrate a chart showing the emotions portrayed and the percent of right answers based on each region. Summarize your results: Can you generalize that one part of the face gives more information? Do different raters have similar success rates when they make judgements based on seeing only part of a face? Do males and females use the same cues to make their judgements? Does rater confidence go along with accuracy in making judgements?

adapted from Burgeon and Saine (1978)

Activity 7 Eye to Eye

Like many forms of nonverbal communication, our expectations for making eye contact are learned early in life. The patterns for sending and interpreting messages become part of our "natural" way of doing things. In general, eye contact shows that the communication channels are open. We don't give it much thought until something unexpected happens. Then communication can become awkward at best if two persons use different patterns of eye gaze.

In the United States, for instance, most children are taught to look others in the eyes when greeting or talking to them—but not to stare. The person who doesn't meet your gaze is judged to be shy or cold or to be hiding something. In some other cultures, however, children are taught just the opposite: to avoid direct eye contact, which is thought to be rude or a threat.

The conventions of the groups we live in regulate how long we look at other people and how we react when people stare at us. In the United States, strangers lower their gaze as they approach (much as approaching cars on a dark road dim their lights). To do otherwise is significant—often interpreted as a challenge or flirting. We feel free to stare at animals or paintings but not at most people. Once we get to know and like someone, we become more comfortable exchanging longer looks. Even among friends, however, a face-to-face staring contest usually dissolves in giggles in less than a minute.

Find out for yourself what happens when you violate people's expectations about eye contact. But be careful: Reactions can be strong.

Have a friend watch while you talk to another person (such as a classmate or a clerk in a store), keeping your eyes downcast, glancing around the room, staring intently at the other person's face, staring at the other person's waist, maintaining eye contact in a comfortable way.

Try each technique on three people. Limit your discussion to a safe, neutral topic such as asking for directions. Take notes and compare what happens in each case.

Summarize your results: Did the persons you talked with seem uncomfortable? Did they ask you what you were looking at? Did they try to end the conversation quickly?

adapted from Gamble & Gamble, 1987

Activity 8 More Than Meets the Eye

Some researchers have studied eye-gaze direction for clues to how we process information. They suggest that people look in one direction when trying to recall something and in another when inventing an answer to a question.

Working with a partner, see if your results agree. Facing your partner, ask the following questions and note where he or she looks while thinking of an answer to each one. Summarize your results: Does your partner's gaze follow a pattern? Does it match that suggested for people who are right-handed?

Questions referring to

remembered images you've seen

What color are the carpets in your car? What color is your instructor's hair? What color are your mother's eyes?

invented visual images

How would you look from my point of view? How would you look in purple and green hair? What would your home look like after it had been ravaged by fire?

sound images you've heard

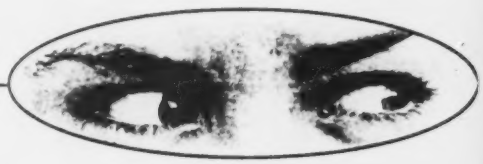
What are the first four notes of Beethoven's Fifth Symphony? Can you hear music you dislike? Can you hear your favorite music?

invented sound images

How would your dog sound singing "Mary Had a Little Lamb"? What would King Kong sound like tiptoeing through the tulips?

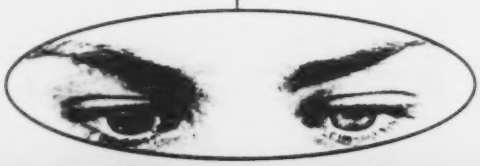
Visually Invented

Visually Remembered



Auditorily Invented

Auditorily Remembered



Activity 9 Dub-ble Feature

Watch two different foreign-language films or two versions of the same film, one with subtitles and one dubbed in English. Describe your reaction to seeing and hearing how the actors' words, expressions, and body movements fit together.

Did you find yourself concentrating on the words or the nonverbal messages?

Which were more believable?

Make and illustrate a chart listing at least 10 different gestures or other examples of body movement as wordless messages in the films. For each, tell the message you think the character was trying to send, and tell if the words spoken (or in the subtitles) sent the same message.

Activity 10 Reel to Real

Watch the body language of actors in silent films or early talkies. Then compare their movements with those of characters in today's soap operas and of your family or friends.

Make and illustrate a chart listing at least 10 different examples of similar facial expressions, gestures, or other body movements used in all three settings—the old movies, the tv programs, and real life. For each, tell the message you think the person was trying to send and compare the movements in each setting. For example, were the gestures of the old-time actors exaggerated?

Proxemics:

Almost everyone spends part of each day alone, part with other people. As humans, we have belonging needs and privacy needs. These needs, our family, and our culture affect how we use the space around us. In turn, our use of space sends nonverbal messages.

Like our prehistoric ancestors or colonial explorers, we each claim some areas. **Territoriality** means claiming and defending a geographic territory as one's own. At home, a family member may make a room or a favorite chair out of bounds to everyone else. At school, a locker or desk may serve as home base for a student.

In a public area like a city bus or a park or a theater, you may make a short-term claim of "your" space. You use **markers** to show the boundaries. For instance, you throw your backpack on the next seat or use your body as a barricade. At the movies, you can stretch your legs out so that other people must use the next aisle to avoid stepping over you. You can spread your arms out over the backs of neighboring chairs to claim a little more space or save a seat for a friend.

Proxemics is the study of how people perceive and use space. Besides observing territoriality, students of proxemics study the use of personal space. **Personal space** is not a fixed geographic area but an invisible bubble of space that surrounds each person. Your bubble changes size depending on how you feel at the moment, whom you talk with, and where you are. In a new place with many strangers, your bubble may expand to shield you from unknown threats. As you relax with friends, your bubble shrinks.

We can identify four elastic layers of personal space around each person: **the intimate zone, the personal zone, the social zone, and the public zone.**

the intimate zone,

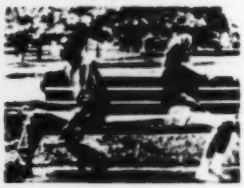
The first zone, the intimate zone, extends from your body outward about 18 inches in all directions. When someone gets that close, you usually become uncomfortable and may back off unless the other person is a very "close" friend or has some specific business being there—such as cutting your hair or cleaning your teeth.

People crowded in a small place like an elevator are forced close together. They feel their personal space bubbles shrink. They may stare at the walls or the floor to avoid "invading" one another's intimate zones. It's almost as if they can con themselves into thinking they're each alone if they don't make eye contact!

the personal zone,

Outside the intimate zone is the personal zone, usually 18 inches to 4 feet, about how far you stand from others at parties or when talking to friends.

the social zone,



The next zone is the social zone, 4 to 12 feet, about how far you stand from people you deal with in stores or businesses.

and the public zone.

Most distant is the public zone, which starts about 12 feet from your body. If you're acting on stage or talking to a large group, you may keep the audience in your public zone.

the study of how people perceive and use s p a c e.

As with most "rules" about nonverbal messages, these descriptions may not fit the way a particular person acts. The society and family you grow up in helps shape the "normal" size of your bubble, as does your personality and experiences.

Activity 11: Spaced Out

Watch how people arrange themselves as a public or shared space fills up. Describe and compare what happens in at least three different settings (for example, a school bus, public transportation, a waiting room, a place of worship, a movie theater, a classroom without assigned seats, a classroom with assigned seats). Do the people seem to know one another? Do they interact or avoid eye contact?

For each setting you observe, sketch a floor plan of the space, marking where the first few people sit or stand. Note the distance between them and which way they face. Can you tell which personal space zone they're trying to keep the others in?

As more people arrive, do they cluster nearby? Or do they spread themselves fairly evenly in the remaining space? In each case, which are the last positions to be filled? Did the spaces fill up in a similar way as more people arrived? If you watch the same place on three different days, is the pattern similar each time?

12 Up Close and Personal

If you enjoyed working with the body idioms in Activity 2: Under Your Skin, try your hand at rephrasing or defining the following expressions related to our use of personal space—without referring to the human body.

Find examples of each phrase being used to describe behavior of a person in a newspaper or magazine article or of a fictional character and in the text of an advertisement or editorial.

Make and illustrate a chart or poster showing the idioms, their meanings, and the examples you found.

to get off one's tail

to jump down one's throat

to be on your coattails

to see eye to eye

to step on one's toes

at your fingertips

to keep at arm's length

with your back against the wall

to breathe down your back

to cramp your style

f you were to list all the ways you've communicated in the past week, chances are you wouldn't include touch. For the most part, the United States is not viewed as a nation of touchers. If we recall that our nonverbal messages speak to our emotions more than our words do, however, we can't ignore the "grammar" of touch.

Haptics is the study of how people use touch. Besides sexual or romantic interest, **touch can convey messages of affection and friendship, support in times of crisis, formal greetings or other rituals, and control or restraint of activity.**

Much as we learn the rules of grammar for spoken or written language, we also learn the grammar of touching others. In each society, even in each family, these ground rules differ. We may have trouble communicating with people who grew up with different ground rules.

We all start life with touch being an important way for interacting with our surroundings. A baby explores by touching everything within reach—food, faces, teddy bears, and toes. Parents may soothe the young child by caressing, cuddling, and rocking. Although words mean nothing to the child at first, touch provides both comfort and information about the world.

As we get older, touching isn't so simple. We learn that many forms are forbidden or not appropriate much of the time. We may feel awkward or babyish or just plain silly whenever we touch other people or they touch us.

As with other nonverbal messages, several factors influence the meaning and use of a particular touch. At a cultural level, people have different standards for expressing feelings like friendship and love by touching. **For example, one study counted how often couples at restaurants touched in an hour. The results were 180 San Juan, Puerto Rico; 110 Paris, France; 2 Gainesville, Florida; 0 London, England.**

The findings might be just as amazing at four different family reunions.

BEST COPY AVAILABLE

study of how people use touch

Other factors determining who touches whom and where and how and for how long are the setting and the roles. At a doctor's or dentist's office, for example, you aren't surprised when health-care workers touch and examine you. The same behavior in other settings would be unusual or upsetting.

Status or power relationships can shape touching behavior, too. Within the bounds of a society's ground rules, the person with higher status or power is more likely to initiate the touching. A tennis instructor, for example, adjusts the student's grip on the racquet. A parent grasps a child's hand to cross a busy street. Almost anyone feels free to pat a toddler's head but not an adult's.

If a favorite aunt visits your classroom to talk about her trip to Africa, you'd probably be embarrassed by

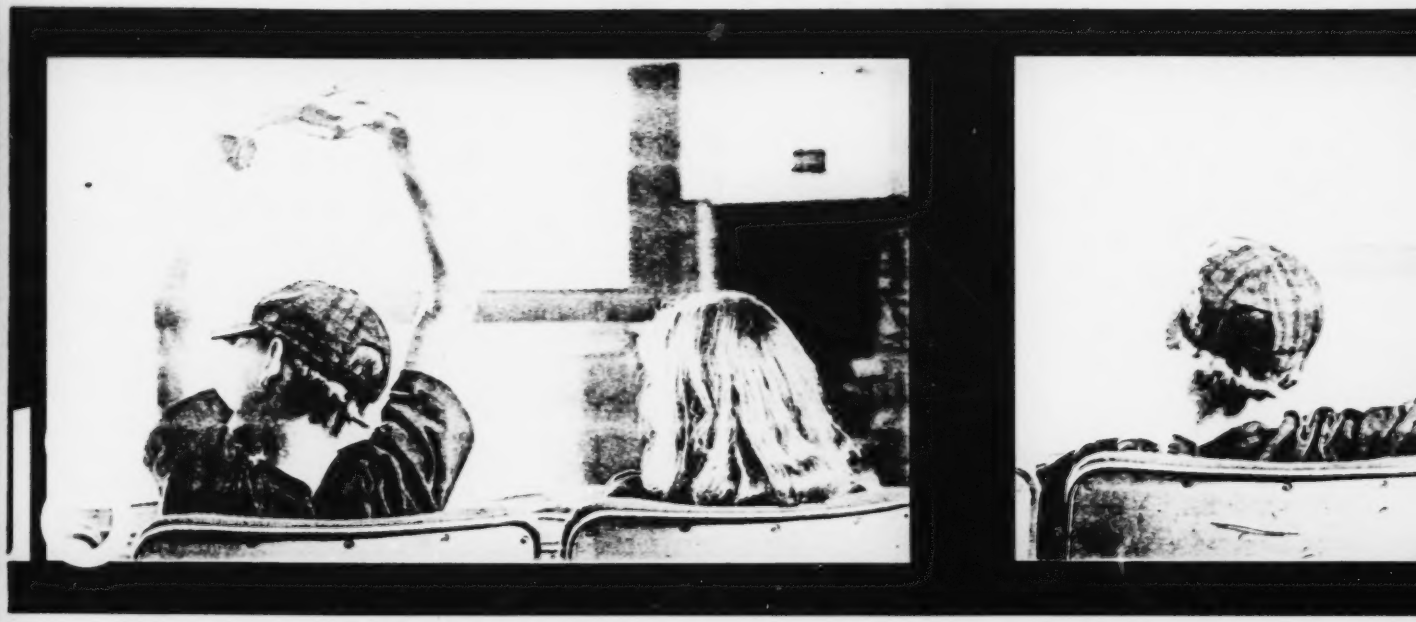
her usual greeting—a tweak of your cheeks and a hug. A similar bear hug from your teammates after a touchdown might be fine—even with more people watching! In other words, both the role and setting you're in help you judge what kind of touching is appropriate and comfortable.

As when observing other nonverbal messages, don't "read" too much into each handshake or pat on the back. Just as cultures differ in their ground rules for touching, a person's history and personality influence his or her touching behavior. In similar settings, any two people differ in the kinds and amount of touching they do—even with family members and close friends. Despite this, we all use touch to cement relationships with people who are emotionally close to us.

Activity 13 The Right Touch

Although our culture closely regulates touching, the language abounds with idioms reminding us of the role of touch in sharing our feelings.

Rephrase or define the following expressions without referring to the human body.



to touch all the bases

at the tip of your nose

at the tip of your tongue

below the belt

from hand to hand

from hand to mouth

on pins and needles

a finger in the pie

a hanger-on

a Midas touch

a slap in the face

a slap on the wrist

a soft touch

to apply a Band-Aid

to be tickled pink

to buttonhole someone

to take the pulse (of a group)

to get a brush off

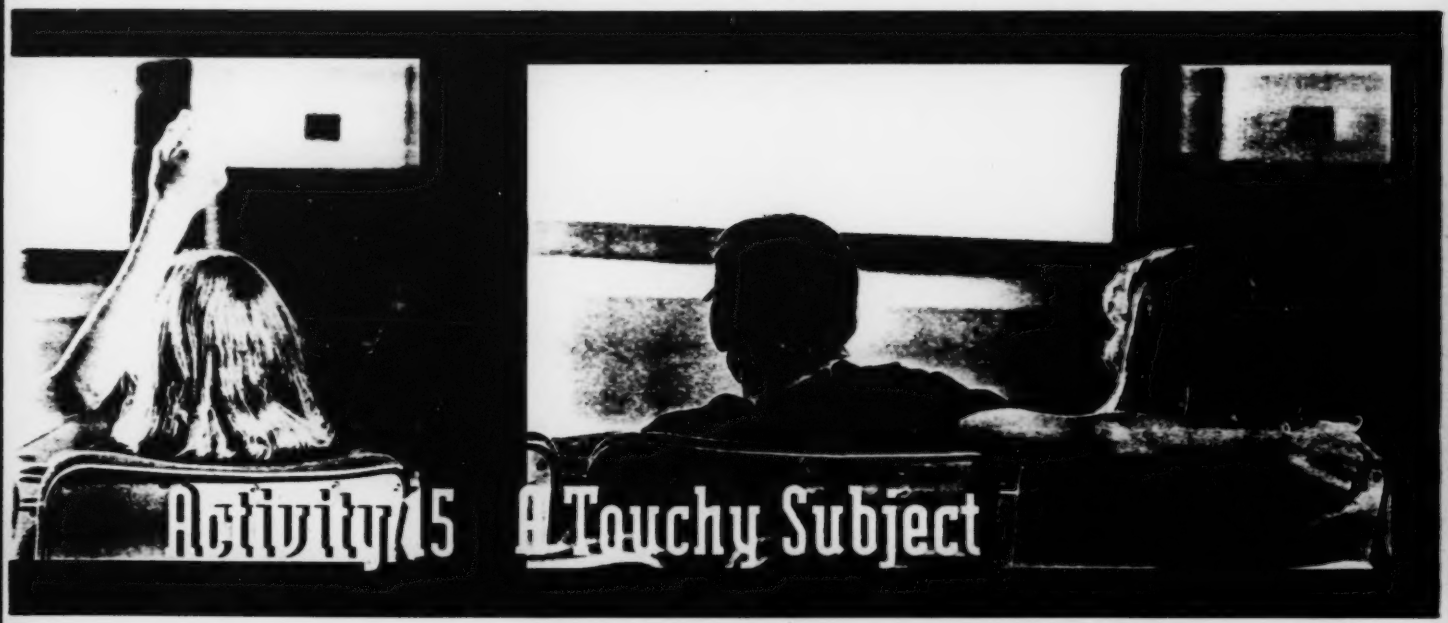
to give one's hand in marriage

to go against the grain

Activity 14 Touch Idioms in Print

For at least 10 of the idioms, find examples of the phrase being used to describe the behavior of both a person in a newspaper or magazine article and a fictional character.

Make and illustrate a chart or poster showing the idioms, their meanings, and the examples you found.



Observe how people use touch to communicate in a public space. Describe and compare what happens in at least three different settings (such as a waiting room, a playground, a religious service, the public library, a shopping mall, and a crowded bus). Stay in each setting at least 30 minutes, counting the number of times people touch.

Classify the touching by the message conveyed:

romantic or sexual interest
affection and friendship
support in times of crisis
formal greetings or other rituals
control or restraint of activity
caregiving

For each class of message that you did not observe directly, identify two settings where you think you might see it.

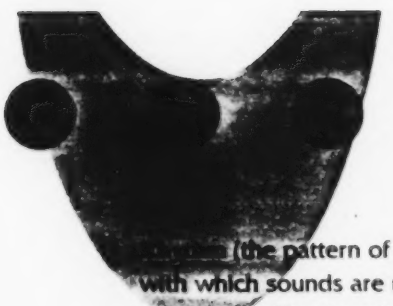
PARALIN

The voice cues that go along with spoken language can say more than your words do. Even if you carefully choose your words or you read from a script, your voice sends a number of nonverbal messages that your listener may react to. **Paralinguistics** is the study of the vocal elements that accompany speech, such as pitch, rate, volume, rhythm, and articulation. Like most nonverbal messages, these elements can reflect your emotions and attitude toward your listener. In general, people associate certain personality stereotypes with certain voice characteristics—but the pairings are not very accurate. Once you become aware of some of these common links, however, you can work to keep your nonverbal messages in harmony with your words.

Pitch is the relative highness or lowness of the voice on a musical scale. We tend to associate lower pitches with strength and maturity, higher pitches with helplessness or nervousness. A flat, monotonous voice may indicate and inspire boredom.

Increased **volume** may reflect emotional intensity, or it may be habit. Loudness is linked with aggression, softness with timidity or politeness. Increased **rate** may indicate enthusiasm or nervousness.

GUISTICS



[illegible] (the pattern of pauses) and **articulation** (the precision with which sounds are made) can reflect a speaker's confidence and affect how believable a listener finds the words.

Besides showing your emotional state, vocal cues can also give clues about personal characteristics such as age, sex, level of education, and the region you're from. Rightly or wrongly, certain body and personality types tend to be associated with certain voice patterns. Here, as in talking about other forms of nonverbal messages, the point is not to teach specific, set meanings for voice cues but to sensitize you to the effects that these cues may have.

Activity 16 Alphabet Recital

Discover how the paralinguistic elements can work together to portray your feelings. Working with a partner, each of you should secretly select an emotion to convey

happiness **anger** **nervousness** **sympathy**

sadness **jealousy** **love** **pride** **satisfaction**

Do not let your partner know your choice. Also, your partner's eyes should be closed.

Your task is to communicate the selected emotion by reciting letters of the alphabet from A to G. Your partner's goal is to identify the emotion by listening to the cues you send.

How did the paralinguistic cues (volume, pitch, rhythm, rate, and articulation) help your partner guess the emotion? If your partner could not determine the emotion you were sending, how could you have made the message clearer?

Adapted from Gamble and Gamble, 1987

BEST COPY AVAILABLE

Activity 17 More Than Words Can Say

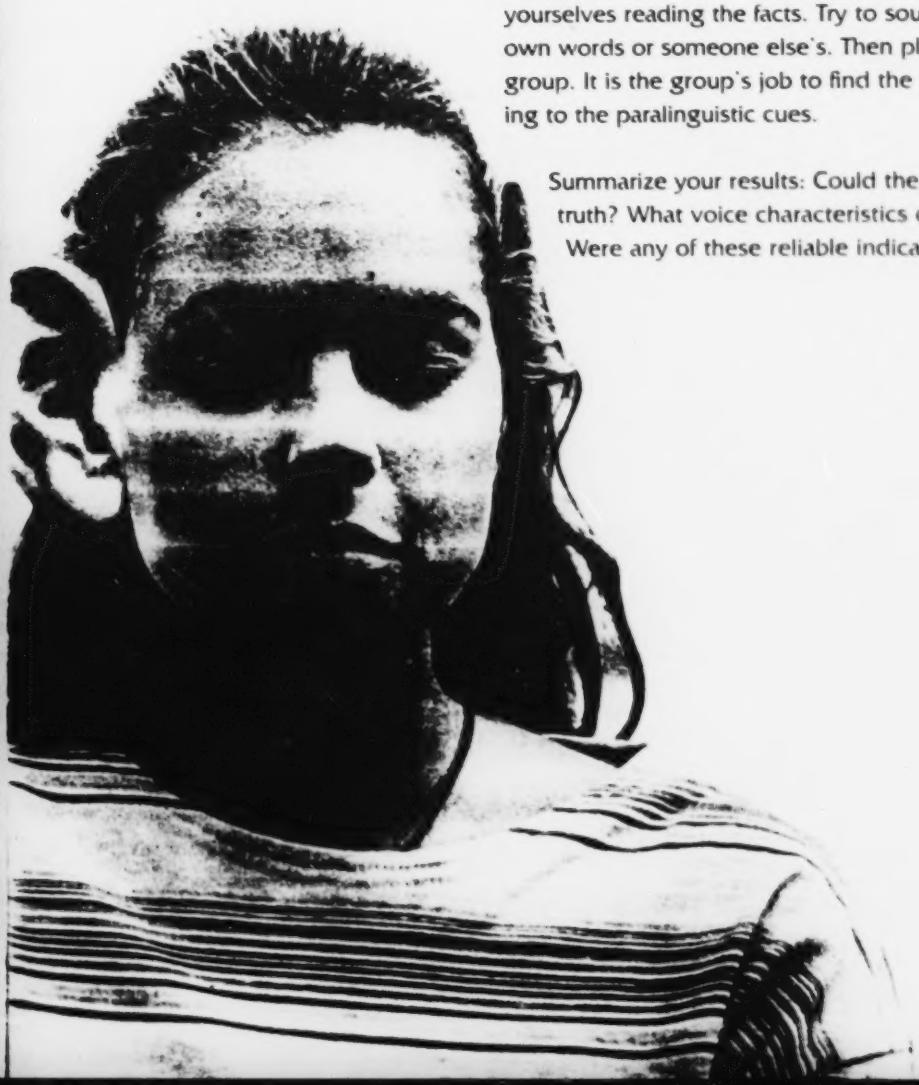
Make and illustrate a chart or poster showing how each emotion listed in Activity 16: Alphabet Recital might affect the voice factors of pitch, volumn, rate, rhythm, and articulation.

Activity 18 To Tell The Truth

Work with two classmates. You each should write 6 to 10 facts about your life in the form of "I" statements. These should be facts that your classmates wouldn't know—but nothing embarassing. A fact could be "I have a three-year-old cousin named Millie" or "The food I hate most is deviled crab cake."

Two of you should exchange fact sheets. Then all three should tape record yourselves reading the facts. Try to sound convincing whether you read your own words or someone else's. Then play the three tapes for your class or 4-H group. It is the group's job to find the person who is telling the truth by listening to the paralinguistic cues.

Summarize your results: Could the group figure out who was telling the truth? What voice characteristics did they try to use to detect the truth? Were any of these reliable indicators?



ARTIFACTS

Besides using our bodies, our voices, and the space around us for sending nonverbal messages, humans can choose from an array of artifacts to make their personal statements. Besides clothing, artifacts include all the other objects that a person wears or carries, such as jewelry, eyeglasses, makeup, tattoos, hairpieces, shopping bags, briefcases, backpacks, headphones, or a cellular phone.

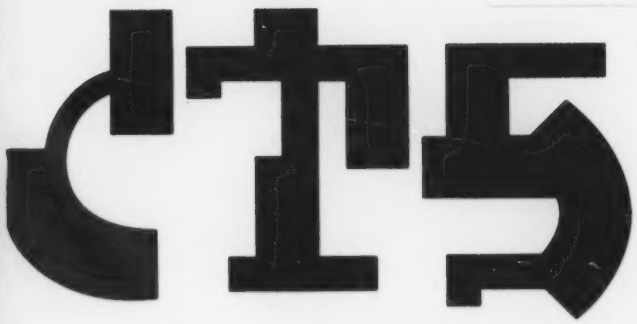
You can follow current trends in clothing and accessories, or you can ignore them. But remember: Every garment, like every gesture, has a potential nonverbal message—sometimes several, depending on the context and your audience.

Your clothing and other artifacts can reveal your status in a community, your group identity, your interests, and aspects of your personality and self-image. Once you become aware of the messages that other people read from your nonverbal behavior, it's up to you to shape the message or image that you present. Your task is to select the components that help communicate what you want to say.

Activity 19 Setting the Stage

Watch a movie that depicts a setting unlike your own community (another country, culture, or historical period). List the title of the movie or program and its setting.

For at least three characters, list the items of clothing or artifacts that help place the story in its setting.



Which items say something about the character's status (such as formal or ragged clothes, military insignia, or elaborate hairstyles)?

Which items show membership in a group or identification with a group that the character admires?

Which items convey something about the character as a person (such as mood, values, or self-image)?

Did some items seem out of place for the movie's setting? (For instance, did the skirt lengths or hairstyles reflect the trends for the year that the movie was made?)

Did your first impressions of the characters predict their behavior and outcome?

Activity 20 In the Public Eye

Select three public figures that are pictured in the press currently, such as people in politics, movies, and sports. Collect at least five pictures of each, along with the accompanying stories. Select both close-up and full-figure shots.

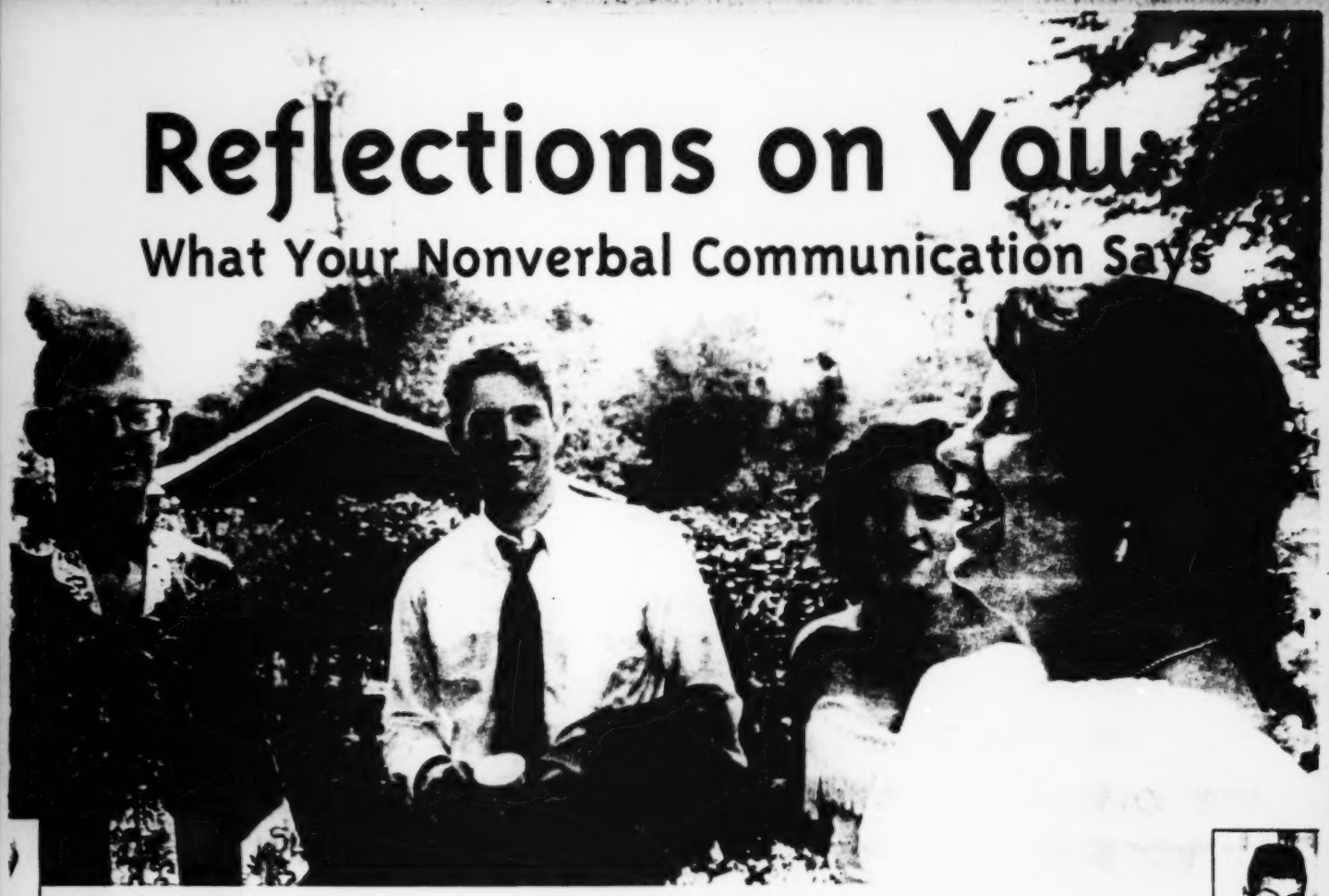
Try to look at each person's photos as if they represent a character in a movie that you were seeing for the first time. Describe the impression that each person makes based on what you see in the photos. (Look at the expressions, posture, clothing, and artifacts.)

Do you get an idea of the person's character, self-image, status in the community, or membership in groups? Do the photos for each person portray a consistent image, or do they contradict one another? Does reading the news stories reinforce or change your "first" impression? What do you think the person might like to change in the way he or she was shown in each picture and story? Do you think the photographer and writer were trying to present what they saw or to shape your image of the public figure?

BEST COPY AVAILABLE

Reflections on You

What Your Nonverbal Communication Says



Imagine what you would see if you could examine your use of nonverbal messages the way you looked at characters in activities 19 and 20. Nonverbal communication is a big part of your **public image,** the face you present to the world. It is also part of your more **private image,** the image you present to yourself, your family, and close friends.

When people meet you, they see your public image. They may communicate with that image more than with you! That is why at times you may dress and act in certain ways to create a good image, or impression. Your public image shows only a surface representation of you. Your private image, or **self-image,** is what you see and what you think others see when they get to know you. Your public image may change many times during a day, depending on whom you're talking to or what role you're in. Your self-image changes, too, but more slowly because it's more complex and central to who you are.

Your public image or your mirror image may give clues to an important part of your private image: your **self-esteem.** The usual way you experience yourself in relation to other people whose opinions you let count is a big part of developing self-esteem. Your self-esteem is your overall opinion of yourself. It is affected by other people and how they view and treat you—in other words, how they communicate their idea of you back to you. It is affected by your own judgments or communications about yourself. And it is affected by how your family, your group, and your culture view you and by how powerful you feel in achieving your goals.

BEST COPY AVAILABLE

Activity 21 If the Shoe Fits

Choose three elements of your nonverbal behavior to change for a day. One day, for example, you might speak very softly. The next, wear white gloves. Then paint your face on the third day.

Keep track of the reactions from your friends and from strangers. Who noticed or commented on the changes? If they didn't say anything, how did they show they noticed? Did anyone react in ways that surprised you? What are some other messages that other people may be "reading" in your nonverbal behavior every day?

At the end of each day, record your observations. Did you feel self-conscious most of the time or did you almost forget about the nonverbal message-of-the-day? Did changing your public image for a day have any effect on your private image?

MB0172

BEST COPY AVAILABLE